

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE, CIC AND SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES  
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2019  
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The Chair opens the meeting

- Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room
- **Finance Committee members present:** Jen Audley, Fred Bowman, Greg Garrison, John Hanold, Chris Menegoni, and Richard Widmer. Michael Naughton was absent.
- **Montague Selectboard members present:** Chris Boutwell and Richard Kuklewicz. Michael Nelson was absent.
- **Capital Improvements Committee members present:** Joshua Lively, Greg Garrison, Fred Bowman and Steven Ellis
- **Others present:** Town Administrator Steve Ellis and Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen.
- The Chair announced that the meeting is being recorded by MCTV and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting. No one else was recording the meeting.

## Minutes

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of March 13, 2019.

Vote: 6 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

## Capital Improvements Committee

The Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) came out of their recess.

The CIC chair Josh Lively presented its report and recommendations (attached at end of minutes) and further noted that this year's report reflects a clarification of the 4 approaches used to evaluate requests, and the rationale for different levels of recommendations. Mr. Hanold asked for more details of how Highly Recommended differed from Recommended, and the CIC replied that the boundary was not precise, but that public safety, cost avoidance and potential personnel cost savings were important factors.

The CIC meeting remained open while recommendations were made in order to answer questions and provide additional information.

The CIC also stated that the group benefits from the experience of two professional contractors, and has begun to follow guidelines for the first time in years.

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There was discussion about the Town Hall awning, glass and metal work. The town has recently found a specialist from Ashfield with historic preservation credentials who has provided an estimate for the work, under \$10,000. DPW will assist and make electrical upgrades.

Ms. Audley asked if we were going to run out of funds somewhere down the list. Mr. Hanold replied that last budget file indicated that these requests could be met.

During discussion about DPW discretionary account, Mr. Kuklewicz asked if there was currently money in this account. Mr. Ellis replied that DPW would be spending down the account for the replacement of a pickup body.

Regarding compost facility, Mr. Kuklewicz asked about plans. Mr. Lively said, TBD. Mr. Ellis then read from a quote that he had received from Stantec Corporation for the study of constructing an onsite, local or regional facility. The benefits of such a study would help us understand what size digester would best serve our community.

Regarding Tech School pump station upgrades, upgrades will save man-hours. Ms. Audley, suggest renaming this article as "Industrial Park pump station upgrade", to avoid confusion with Tech School. Mr. Widmer questioned additional money for pump upgrades, when Supt. McDonald had stated that his discretionary funds would be used to do this work. Mr. Ellis replied that there are 8 pumps and prices are rising, and that discretionary funds had been used to cover these cost gaps. Mr. Lively shared that each pump is different. Mr. Hanold suggested that discretionary funds be used for miscellaneous upgrades, and this article is being used for a specific job. Mr. Widmer adds that he is not against repair and update to pumps, and his no vote is out of his concern that there are limited resources available for current and upcoming major capital needs.

Regarding Millers Falls I/I study, Mr. Ellis explained that the Town of Erving suggested that the amount of waste being treated at Erving WWTP from Millers Falls in 2018 was unusually high, resulting in a significant surcharge for its treatment. Through investigation, during heavy rain events, opening manhole covers, significant amounts of clean water was observed running in the system. Town of Erving processes 13 million gallons of wastewater from Millers Falls. Mr. Ellis says this is an enormous amount, its not how it should be and there is a problem. We need to identify where the problem is and correct it, per contractual obligation. Mr. Kuklewicz remembers that this has been a longstanding issue. Mr. Bowman adds detail about railroad. Mr. Kuklewicz asks to include review of earlier report. Mr. Boutwell suggests that the report was conducted 7 years ago. Ms. Audley asks if there is a timeline for this work and the basis for this price quote. Mr. Lively offers no answer. Mr. Ellis suggests that the cost is associated with the length of pipe to be examined.

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The proposed MF I&I study will provide rigorous data on both the sources of the inflow and infiltration and the best way to resolve the issue, which may require a significant investment.

Regarding Montague Center Library, Mr. Kuklewicz comments that he questions the entire cost of maintaining the Montague Center Library and the value to the town. The building is great to have, the location is great, it is historic, but we are just putting Band-Aids on it, and the town may lose it in the long run. Mr. Boutwell remembers that it was the former Town Hall. Ms. Audley sees the purpose of this funding is to maintain the current building, but she does not have a sense of a larger master plan for the Town's libraries. Mr. Bowman says that no real solid plans have been developed, that Carnegie has serious needs too, and they are focusing on the satellite libraries in Millers and Montague Center, in the meantime. Mr. Ellis adds that the Library Trustees have recently reformed their facilities committee and have prepared a detailed list of smaller maintenance issues, and requested the services of an architect.

Mr. Ellis added that because there is a large amount of procurement underway, he has asked the Library to wait until next year's budget season. He also laments that the libraries are throwing away damaged books, indicating that there is urgency.

Discussion of this article, and two others later on, included the observation that repairs and maintenance of the Library buildings are addressing only specific short-term needs. We expect longer-term proposals in the future, as the CIC looks at Library needs in greater depth.

Mr. Kuklewicz comments that he does not disagree with doing this project, but that this building deserves more. He wonders if the building could become a public/private enterprise, to make the building sustainable, akin to Montague Grange Hall. Mr. Hanold wonders how many such "special old buildings" can Montague Center support.

Regarding GMRSD facilities truck, Mr. Widmer asks what happened to the old one. The entire CIC replies, "it's broken", adding that it is old and can no longer go in reverse. Ms. Audley asks about funding source, and asks mechanics of drawing from Kearsage solar lease-funded GMRSD Stabilization Fund. Carolyn replies that typically she waits until there is a significant balance, not spending every year, to help build larger balances. Mr. Kuklewicz supports this spending, but wishes that this vehicle would be included in the GMRSD school budget, similar to police cruiser. Ms. Audley agrees and hopes that the GMRSD could get to a place where it can plan for buying new vehicles. Mr. Hanold agrees and states that the school's ownership of the issue is important.

Regarding Sheffield Admin building columns and repair, Mr. Kuklewicz raises the question of last year's purchase, without a plan for installation. Mr. Ellis replies that the opinion of new GMRSD

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facilities director is that the scope of work could not be completed in-house. Ms. Audley asks for support from the CIC to push the school district to make responsible and accurate requests.

Regarding TFHS sidewalks, Mr. Ellis comments that the sidewalks are heavily pitted and damaged by heavy equipment. Granite curbs will last longer. Engineer for project will be Jim Toth.

Regarding tabulators, Mr. Hanold asked if there is any consideration to reduce the number of districts (and therefore the need for 7 tabulators). The number of precincts can't be reduced until after the 2020 census. Several members of the committee state that hand counting of ballots is a heavy burden on poll workers. Mr. Widmer silently wonders if we are undermining our democracy by turning voting over to computers.

Regarding Carnegie Library front doors, Mr. Lively and Mr. Garrison joke that being caught in the Carnegie doors may be a rite of passage for living in town. Ms. Audley clarifies that this project includes two aspects, safety and security.

Regarding Hillcrest requests, due to incomplete cost estimates, CIC recommends that these articles be voted down. Mr. Boutwell shares his listening that future repair costs for Hillcrest will be significant, masonry and windows. Mr. Garrison shares details on energy plan for Hillcrest and the need for more information. Will revisit in future. Ms. Audley, Mr. Ellis and Mr. Kuklewicz discuss the misunderstanding around previous electrical updates to Hillcrest.

The CIC emphasized that their review was focused on the requests submitted by department heads, but that their interests also include planning for future needs of town-owned buildings. No indication of a time-line for their future work was offered.

### **Preliminary Budget Recommendations**

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$8,975 for repair of the Town Hall awning, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 6 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$8,975 for repair of the Town Hall awning, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 2 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$100,000 for the DPW discretionary account, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 6 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

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Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$100,000 for the DPW discretionary account, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$25,500 for compost facility engineering, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$25,500 for compost facility engineering, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$55,000 for Industrial Park pump station upgrades, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote:   5   In Favor        1   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$55,000 for Industrial Park pump station upgrades, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$50,000 for an engineering study of Millers Falls inflow and infiltration, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$50,000 for an engineering study of Millers Falls inflow and infiltration, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$22,050 for moisture remediation at the Montague Center Library, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

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Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$22,050 for moisture remediation at the Montague Center Library, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$35,344 for a facilities truck for the GMRSD, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$35,344 for a facilities truck for the GMRSD, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$21,755 for installations of columns at the Sheffield/Administrative building, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$21,755 for installations of columns at the Sheffield/Administrative building, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$76,670 for the town's share of the cost to replace sidewalks and curbs at the Turners Falls High School, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$76,670 for the town's share of the cost to replace sidewalks and curbs at the Turners Falls High School, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$50,000 for election tabulators, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$50,000 for election tabulators, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

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Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$20,000 for moisture remediation at the Millers Falls Library, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$20,000 for moisture remediation at the Millers Falls Library, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$10,000 for modifications and repairs to the front and inside doors of the Carnegie Library, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote:   6   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$10,000 for modifications and repairs to the front and inside doors of the Carnegie Library, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote:   2   In Favor        0   Opposed        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$25,000 for repairs to the façade of the Hillcrest Elementary School, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   0   In Favor        6   **Opposed**        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$25,000 for repairs to the façade of the Hillcrest Elementary School, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   0   In Favor        2   **Opposed**        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$41,200 for upgrades to the Hillcrest electrical system, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   0   In Favor        6   **Opposed**        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$41,200 for upgrades to the Hillcrest electrical system, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote:   0   In Favor        2   **Opposed**        0   Abstained

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Capital Improvements Committee Moved:

To have Chair Lively confer with Mr. Ellis to make any final adjustments to their report.

Vote: 4 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

CIC adjourned at 7:43 PM

Additional Articles for Consideration:

Last week the Finance Committee and Selectboard recommended various segment of the Town operating budget, but did not recommend a total or the funding sources.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$9,828,399 for the fiscal year town operating budget, to be funded with \$50,000 from Free Cash and \$9,778,399 from Taxation.

Vote: 6 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$9,828,399 for the fiscal year town operating budget, to be funded with \$50,000 from Free Cash and \$9,778,399 from Taxation.

Vote: 2 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$1,055,178 for the fiscal year 2020 assessment to the Franklin County Technical School, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 6 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$1,055,178 for the fiscal year 2020 assessment to the Franklin County Technical School, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 2 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained

- Mr. Kuklewicz is on the FCTS School Committee, but as there were only 2 Selectboard members present, he voted under the Rule of Necessity.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$124,369 to the Town Capital Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 6 In Favor      0 Opposed      0 Abstained



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Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$124,369 to the Town Capital Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote:   2   In Favor                        0   Opposed                        0   Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend \$78,000 to the FCTS Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Free.

Vote:   6   In Favor                        0   Opposed                        0   Abstained

Selectboard Moved:

To recommend \$78,000 to the FCTS Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote:   2   In Favor                        0   Opposed                        0   Abstained

- Mr. Kuklewicz is on the FCTS School Committee, but as there were only 2 Selectboard members present, he voted under the rule of necessity.

**Finance Committee Report and town meeting warrant/motion information**

Suggestions for the report:

- When incorporating the CIC report items, Mr. Hanold suggested using “Sheffield administration building” instead of “Sheffield School” and “Industrial Park pump station” for “FCTS Pump Station.”
- Ms. Audley said the CIC’s process seems important and asked if it could be included in the Finance Committee’s report. This was granted.
- Mr. Garrison noted that having general contractors on the CIC has been very helpful in evaluating projects.
- Ms. Audley proposed incorporating CIC report information, with some slight editing, into the Finance Committee’s report sections on specific articles.
- The main report and town meeting warrant/motion information will be prepared and sent out by March 27<sup>th</sup> so that people have a chance to review it for the April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Mr. Garrison and Mr. Naughton will work on the main report.
- Ms. Audley asked that everyone be prepared to offer specific input at the April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.
- Mr. Widmer suggested a separate standard font for commentary and the use of page notes.

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**Finance Committee Report to Town Meeting/Town Meeting Information**

Financial Policies

Mr. Hanold offered a second draft, and a second option was also presented for review. The second option was preferred and will be fine-tuned as information is confirmed. It was suggested that the section from the top to general health measures can be incorporated into the general report and the regular actions can be incorporated with the motions.

**Next Meeting Date:** –April 3<sup>rd</sup> to review the Finance Committee Report to Town Meeting

**Topics not anticipated within in the 48 hour posting requirements – none**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM**

**List of Documents and Exhibits:**

- Minutes of March 13, 2019
- Ms. Audley's draft articles for Schedules I and II
- Mr. Hanold's Financial Policy information
- Option 2 for Financial Policy information

**Capital Improvement Committee**  
**FY 19 Report to the Finance Committee**  
***Recommendations related to FY20 Capital Article Requests***

The Capital Improvements Committee has been meeting frequently since January 1st with department heads to evaluate capital needs as outlined by Special Article Requests submitted. The Special Article Request forms that were adopted and implemented last year continue to serve as the backdrop for outlining and presenting the capital needs of each department. This year's report of recommendations has been further clarified with the adoption of defined criteria/rationale for recommendations that support implementation of a new grading system.

This report first presents the criteria summarizes the approach used in evaluation of requested articles, then presents recommendations related to two projects considered as part of this cycle that have already been funded, and finally presents recommendations for all other capital and building improvement projects submitted for consideration in the FY20 budget cycle.

**I. Approach to Evaluation of Requested Articles**

***A. Defined Criteria/Rationale***

***Public Safety:*** Does the capital improvement rectify a safety concern or otherwise prevent a potential public safety issue?

*example:* Installing the new front porch/egress stairs at the senior center. The old porch egress had stairs with risers that were inches higher than what is allowed by building code, resulting in the potential of a dangerous fall.

***Cost avoidance:*** Will the capital improvement save the town financially?

*example:* Replacing the controls at Denton Street pump station. New equipment can be monitored remotely resulting in less occasions of having to send crew out to check on system.

***Service Interruption:*** Does the capital improvement prevent an interruption in services?

*example:* Replacing the building management system and components at TFHS. Without upgrading and replacing the hardware and software the school would be vulnerable to losing its ability to operate the equipment necessary to control classroom temperatures. The original equipment is obsolete and no longer supported by the service provider.

***Other-*** Any other reason identified and relevant.

***B. Grading System***

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**Highly Recommend** The committee strongly believes that the capital improvement should be funded and completed immediately. The special article request form submitted is complete and cost estimates appear reasonable. The rationale for the improvement meets one or more identified criteria

**Recommend:** Given appropriate budget space, the committee believes that the capital improvement should be funded, although they may not be as urgent as projects graded

**Recommend with reservations:** The committee would normally recommend the capital improvement, except the request form is incomplete, lacks a professional estimate, or doesn't address or account for the long term needs and concerns of the town.

**Does not recommend:** The committee does not recommend moving forward with the capital improvement as presented, whether due to the nature or timing of the project, the quality of quote or other information submitted to support the article or other reasons.

## **II. Capital Improvement Articles**

### ***Summary of Submissions and Recommendations***

The committee considered sixteen Special Article Requests this year, ten of which are true Capital Articles with costs estimated to be above \$25,000. Six articles are Non-Capital Requests related very directly to building maintenance that the committee elected to offer recommendations on with agreement from the Finance Committee. Two first two of these Special Article Requests were previously approved by Special Town Meeting in February 2019.

#### ***A. Articles previously approved***

##### ***Selectboard: Replace, repair and Insulate Town Hall Annex and lower roof sections \$165,000***

Replacement of Town Hall Annex roof as well as rear entry and mechanical room roofs. The Town Hall Annex roof is actively leaking, its roof drains are failing, and the entire soffit system is deteriorating. Likewise, the roof over the mechanical room is covered in moss. This is the roof where the AC condenser sits. The rear entry roof is newer and doesn't not require replacement, but its life can be extended with the use of walkway pads at strategic locations in order to reduce damage caused by falling snow and ice from the main roof. Both roofs being replaced will also receive an R-30 foam insulation upgrade.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Highly Recommended.***

Cost avoidance. The Town Hall Annex roof currently has several active leaks. One of which drips onto a steel girder which supports a large section of the roof. If left unattended the leak will eventually compromise the structural steel and the girder would need replacement.

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Public Safety: Open leaks into the building present a health risk for town employees who must navigate around the wet spots with electrical cords as well as manage the buildup of ice as the leaks refreeze at night in the cold months.

*Article approved at Special Town Meeting on February 19th, 2019.*

***Selectboard: Replace and insulate Shea Theater upper (main) roof section. \$47,975***

Replacement of the Shea Theater main roof with new membrane as well as adding an R-30 foam insulation upgrade, at a total cost of up to \$96,975. This article would add to the original appropriation of \$49,000 in order to facilitate the installation of a new rubber membrane instead of having a spray on coating applied. It became obvious that this was the better route after the town was unable to secure a warranty from a reputable company with the coating.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: Highly Recommended*

Cost Avoidance. With the roof actively leaking, the town runs the risk of more damage to roof structure as well as the possibility of damage to the tenant's theater equipment.

**Service interruption**: If the roof is not replaced soon it is likely that the current leak will increase as the existing roof deteriorates. A major rain event could trigger a massive leak which would then result in a forced closure and emergency repair of the roof.

*Article approved at Special Town Meeting on February 19th, 2019.*

***B. Articles/Recommendations for fiscal year 2019-2020***

***Selectboard: Restoration of lower section of Town Hall Front Awning. \$8,975***

Restore 19th century metalwork that serves as awning for the Town Hall. The awning is made of copper, brass and decorative glass and is seriously damaged from years of exposure. At this point the awning can still be salvaged but should the town avoid the restoration, it will certainly deteriorate beyond repair. Town DPW to assist in removal and re-installation of lower skirt. The Town has finally found a local silversmith able and willing to repair the piece, but he is in his 60's and near retirement.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: Highly Recommended*

Public Safety: As the brass and copper continues to curl as it deteriorates, the glass inserts loosen and fall onto the sidewalk below. Many members of the community use this entrance Town Hall. Also, people walking their dogs run the risk of broken glass in paws.

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Cost Avoidance: If the awning is left to rot in place then soon it will become dangerous and require removal and disposal. The cost of installing a modern awning would certainly cost more than restoration of the current awning.

Other. Historic relevance: This awning is understood to have been salvaged from another historic town building and represents a unique and irreplaceable building feature.

***DPW: Equipment Discretionary Account. \$100,000***

Provide accessible funding for the DPW superintendent to fund purchases of and/or major repairs to DPW vehicles and equipment. Addresses unforeseen expenditures where timelines is of importance. Historically granted to DPW superintendent.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Highly Recommended***

Service interruption: Should a vehicle or large piece of equipment fail (without this appropriation) it is quite possible that said equipment could remain out of service, while the Town identifies a method to appropriate funding to repair or replace.

***Sewer: Engineer Study of Compost Facility. \$25,500***

Provide a cost and location to build a composting facility that can handle all sludge produced by Montague WPCF. Plus, a feasibility study to see if composting all sludge is a more cost effective way of sludge management.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade. **Highly Recommended***

Cost avoidance: Sludge disposal accounts for nearly 30% of the Operation and Maintenance budget of the WPCF. Composting could drastically reduce the cost of sludge disposal, resulting in the stabilization of sewer rates to users.

***Sewer: Tech School Pump Station Upgrade. \$55,000***

Upgrade Tech school pump station components original to the 30ish year old pump station. Replace the control panel and level sensors in the wet well. New upgrade to be based on upgrades to pump stations completed at Denton Street and Lake Pleasant pump stations. Upgraded system can be monitored and controlled remotely.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Highly Recommended***

Cost avoidance: The Tech School pump station handles the most caustic water of all the pumps stations in town. This is due to having to handle the industrial park sewer water. The station puts out more errant alarms

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than any other pump station in town. Replacing the components would allow for remote operation of the station and reduce the number of instances where a crew must be sent to check on the pump station.

***Sewer: Millers Falls I&I Assessment. \$50,000***

Contract an engineering firm to assess inflow and infiltration in the village of Millers Falls. About 65% of the water entering the Millers sewer is from an unknown source or sources. In 2018 approximately 13 million gallons of water was pumped to Millers Falls and 35 million gallons were treated by Erving WWTP.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade. Highly Recommended*

Cost Avoidance: The additional 20 million gallons of water being treated by the waste water treatment plan in Erving could result in additional costs/fines as a result of the overages.

Other-Environmental: It is widely believed that the source of the excessive water entering the sewer system will turn out to be the many numerous underground springs that exist under the village of Millers Falls. In essence this means that 20 million gallons of clean water is being combined with sewer water and treated by the plant in Erving yearly.

***Library: Montague Center Library Moisture remediation. \$22,050***

Address the persistent moisture issues at the library. Moisture and mold have destroyed many books and artifacts and if left unchecked will inevitably compromise structural aspects of the building. The moisture issue stems mainly from an uncovered dirt floor basement and leaky duct system that allow the exchange of unconditioned and conditioned air. Some mold has developed in the backup bathroom and hallway and this will be remediated as well. Installation of a vapor barrier and duct and air sealing comprise the majority of the mitigation process.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade. Highly Recommended*

Public Safety: The transfer of moisture laden air into the library has led to complaints of poor air quality and from staff and patrons alike. The active mold in the bathroom and hallway present a public safety hazard by their existence in the public space.

Cost Avoidance: Two main trunks of supply ducting are rotting in place along the east and west wall. The ducts in question are constructed of un-galvanized tin nailed to floor joists as to use the bay between joists for a air passage. The tin sheet metal has rotted in several locations and as a result the warm air from the furnace blows onto the dirt floor of the crawlspace instead of into the registers. Hard to calculate exactly how much of energy is wasted via these leaks but conservative estimates are 15-20%.

***GMRSD: Ford F-250 \$35,344***

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Replace the district's plow truck with a new model equipped with a new plow. The current plow truck is currently unable to pass state vehicle inspection and no longer goes into reverse. The gas tank straps have rotted and the brake lines are deteriorating. Repair costs likely in the high thousands without the body/frame rust. New truck to be equipped with heavy duty suspension to handle the districts sand spreader.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Highly Recommended***

Service Interruption: The district is currently down to one plow truck that is equipped onto a one-ton dump truck. When a snow event happens, the district must request assistance from the Town DPW to clear the lots and ways of snow and apply sand/salt. This effectively takes a DPW off the town roads for hours each snow event.

***GMRSD: Administrative Building Column Replacement. \$21,755***

Complete the installation of the Admin Building columns that were purchased in 2017. Brick landing to be repointed in conjunction with column replacement and facade to be replaced where rotted. Painting of front entrance included in project scope. New aluminum railings to be installed as well.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Highly Recommended***

Public Safety: The front entrance to the Admin building is no longer usable by the public and is cordoned off. This eliminates emergency egress and also presents a danger to people unfamiliar with the building who may attempt to exit the building through this egress.

Other- Aesthetic Value: Caution tape stretched across rotten wooden columns with the replacement columns lying on the ground next to the entrance for years is not a pleasing image. This is the administrative building for the entire district and this defunct entrance sends the wrong message to visitors of the school.

***GMRSD: TFHS Sidewalks \$76,670***

Replace front sidewalks in front of the Turners Falls High School. The project will replace all of the deteriorated sidewalks along front of building. Seventeen years of plowing with a metal plow blade have caused significant damage to the front sidewalks. Granite curbs to be installed in affected locations and salt guard and salt guard schedule to be implemented,

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommended***

Public Safety: The deteriorated sidewalks are currently a tripping hazard as well as running the risk for ADA non-compliance.

***Town Clerk: Tabulators for Elections. \$50,000***

Replace the ballot boxes in all seven precincts with new optical scanners. The ballot boxes, while quaint, have proved problematic of the last several years. The counting mechanisms are not functioning properly and some



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of the lock mechanisms are failing. Long elections are forcing poll workers to stay until 2-3 am hand counting votes. An extra tabulator is also planned on being purchased as a backup.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommended***

Cost Avoidance: The Town Clerk estimates that she will be able to downsize her poll workers from 6-9 people per precinct down to 1-2 while also cutting the amount of time spent tabulating. At a cost of \$12 per hour per worker multiplied out, it is a considerable savings.

Other-Maintaining Election Integrity: With the counting mechanisms failing in some machines and the lock mechanisms failing as well, the Town risks jeopardizing the integrity of our election process.

***Library: Millers Falls Library Moisture Remediation. \$20,000***

Address the moisture and structural issues at the library. The basement is very damp. Exposed window wells allow storm water to enter the basement where that water then pools and needs to be pumped out. Water also enters the basement through the front and side masonry joints where the mortar has severely disintegrated. Filling in the window wells along with repointing the masonry is advised. The structural support beams under the front of the store need permanent columns installed along with some minor repairs to the beams themselves.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommended***

Cost Avoidance: Left untreated the leaking masonry will crumble and fail resulting in expensive renovation costs. The leaks also travel along the sill band and given time the sill will rot and need repair. Recently thirty-two feet of rotten sill cost \$10,000 to repair without the added costs of prevailing wage. Without installation of proper support columns in basement the beams will continue to sag and buckle which could result in issues with doors, windows and even roofing systems.

Public Safety: Left unattended the beams under the floor will continue to deteriorate and sag. Over time this will denigrate the structure and be a potential safety hazard for all who walk through the library front door

***Library: Carnegie Library Dangerous Door Repair/Renovation and Door Weatherization. \$10,000***

Repair, restore and refinish main entry doors at Carnegie Library. Convert a pair of interior vestibule doors to swing in one direction only. The interior doors at the library are a known hazard and their quick and heavy swings have injured more than one visitor to the library. Installation of new modern hinge mechanisms is advised so the door swings one way only. Additionally, the exterior entry doors are weathered to the point where they will require removal and restoration offsite. New weather stripping is to be added when exterior doors are re-installed.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommended***

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Public Safety: The swing of the interior doors has injured library goers before, including children. Luckily no one has been seriously injured from the heavy doors yet.

Cost Avoidance: Leaving the exterior doors to the elements without refinishing for many more years will result in the inability to repair them at all. Instead they will need total replacement. The size, age and construction detail of the doors would indicate an expensive replacement cost.

***GMRSD: Hillcrest Facade and Masonry Improvements. \$20,000-\$25,000***

Repair several critical areas of facade at the Hillcrest School. Many of the outside corners are cracking and other areas are deteriorating. Along with the masonry repair there are also issues with the window sills rotting, allowing carpenter bees to create homes inside them. Some areas around the widows will also need recalling and painting as well.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Not Recommended***

While the project is certainly necessary to maintain the integrity of the brickwork facade as well as to keep insects and moisture from penetrating the building envelope, the committee received insufficient information to recommend the project at this time. Without a written estimate and lacking a coherent plan denoting which areas would receive repair as well as how extensive the repairs would be, the committee couldn't, in good faith, recommend the project as it was presented. The district requested quotes from local sources but had not received one as a basis for submission in time for this budget cycle.

***GMRSD: Hillcrest Electrical - Upgrade/Amperage. \$41,200***

Increase amperage and add new circuits to allow air conditioners to be installed into each classroom. The current 100 amp panels do not poses the capacity to handle the load which would be drawn when all air conditioning units are running. The school recently received the upgrade of the 600 amp disconnect and it was assumed at that time the new upgrade would allow window ac units to be installed. However, this turned out not to be the case. Along with the upgraded service the project also includes installation of dedicated 20 amp circuits and air conditioner outlets for each classroom.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Not Recommended***

Public Safety: The teachers at Hillcrest have purported to measure classroom temperatures that are excessive and, in some instances, higher than what Massachusetts requires by law. The maximum allowable temperature in classrooms is seventy eight degrees. This issue may be common to schools throughout the district and across the commonwealth but is taken seriously by the committee.

Although the committee would've likely ranked this Capital Article Request with a higher grade, we were unable to due to the lack of quality and clarity of the quote received.

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To complicate matters further, the MEC is currently contacting firms to conduct a study of alternative heating and cooling sources for the both Sheffield and Hillcrest, paid for a state META grant. This study will likely consider the feasibility studies for heat exchangers that would heat and cool the classrooms from a cost and technical feasibility standpoint. Note that if the electrical upgrade proposed were to take place then the heat exchangers would likely be able to utilize these circuits for power but may not be installed in a fashion wholly consistent with the needs of a new system. Including this electrical upgrade as part of completer and more coherent plan for this building is recommended.

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Draft information for Schedule I – Elected Salaries

**Article # MOVED:** That the Town vote to fix the salaries of all elected officials as required by law for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019, as set forth in Schedule I, Elected Officials. (??  
*Whose request?*)  
*[insert Schedule I chart]*

**Background:** Stipends for part-time elected officials are set by the Finance Committee. The Town Clerk and Treasurer/Collector are also elected, but as they are full-time employees of the town, their salaries are linked to those of full-time appointed officials. Cost-of-living-adjustments (COLAs) for FY20 are pending the outcome of collective bargaining; if an appropriation for this purpose is required, it will be proposed at a future Special Town Meeting. The Treasurer/Tax Collector is shown on Schedule I and Schedule II because the position remains appointed until the annual Town Election in May of 2019.

**Comment:** This year the Finance Committee undertook a comprehensive evaluation of stipends and inspection fees in Schedules I and II. All were increased modestly; some for the first time in many years. The stipends for the chairs of three boards (Selectboard, Board of Health, Board of Assessors) were adjusted to be slightly higher than members' stipends. The Committee intends to maintain the Schedule I stipends at the FY20 level for at least five years. On the advice of the Personnel Board, we support the Treasurer's request for a step adjustment, phased in over two fiscal years.

Finance Committee Recommends 6-0  
Selectboard Recommends 2-0

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Draft information for Schedule II– Appointed Salaries

**ARTICLE #. MOVED:** That the Town vote to fix the salaries of all appointed officials as required by law for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019, as set forth in Schedule II, Appointed Officials. (?? Whose request?)

*[insert Schedule II chart]*

**Background:** Most of these stipends, inspection rates, and hourly rates are set by the Finance Committee. Full-time employees of the town who are appointed by the Selectboard [??how to describe what the wage grade step scale system is???]. Cost-of-living-adjustments (COLAs) for FY20 are pending the outcome of collective bargaining; if an appropriation for this purpose is required, it will be proposed at a future Special Town Meeting. The Treasurer/Tax Collector is shown on Schedule I and Schedule II because the position remains appointed until the annual Town Election in May of 2019.

**Comment:** This year the Finance Committee undertook a comprehensive evaluation of stipends and inspection fees in Schedules I and II. All were increased modestly; some for the first time in many years. The Committee intends to maintain the Schedule II stipends at this level for at least five years.

Some part-time hourly rate ranges were adjusted to account for increases to the Massachusetts minimum wage that will take effect in FY20.

On the advice of the Personnel Board, we support the Treasurer's request for a step adjustment, phased in over two fiscal years.

Finance Committee Recommends 6-0  
Selectboard Recommends 2-0

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**ARTICLES XX – YY: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

In 2014 the Selectboard adopted a statement of **Financial Management Policies**, establishing a set of goals the town strives to meet in order to support the sustainability in its operations. Adherence to then also helps to provide resources for periodic major expenditures, or to respond to unusual changes in revenue. (These goals do not include the Colle Building, the Airport, or the Water & Pollution Control Facility, each of which has its own resources.)

Some goals are “general health” goals, which may not require an appropriation, and others are “regular action” goals, prescribing annual provisions to address current and future needs . A benchmark for several of these goals is Prior Year General Operating Revenue (PYGOR), which consisted of \$19,218,118 for Fiscal Year 2018:

Net Tax Levy	\$16,451,693
Less: excluded Debt	(747,324)
Net State Aid plus Local Receipts	<u>3,513,749</u>
PYGOR	\$19,218,118

**General Health Measure** Total Stabilization Funds plus Free Cash to be maintained at 5 – 10% of PYGOR.

Free Cash	\$470,507	28 Feb after STM
Capital Stabilization	117,454	31 March
General Stabilization	981,128	31 March
GMRSD Stabilization	37,988	31 March
FCTS Stabilization	<u>46,025</u>	31 March
Total	\$1,653,102	8.60 %

5% Lower Level	\$ 960,906	<b>NO ACTION NEEDED</b>
10% Upper Level	\$1,921,812	

**General Health Measure** General Stabilization to be maintained at a minimum of 5% of PYGOR.

General Stabilization	981,128	31 March
	5.11%	<b>NO ACTION NEEDED</b>

**General Health Measure** Budgeted Debt Service, plus PAYGO Capital projects, should be between 6% and 8% of PYGOR.

Town Long-term Principal	\$478,295
Town Long-term Interest	330,498
GMRSD Long-term Debt	193,916
Police Cruiser	51,600
Flail Mower Lease	24,090
Est. DPW Discret. (50%)	50,000
School Projects (5)	174,969
Election Tabulator	50,000

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Library Projects (3)	<u>52,050</u>
Total	\$1,405,418

6% Lower Level	\$1,153,087	<b>NO ACTION NEEDED</b>
8% Upper Level	\$1,537,449	

**General Health Measure:** Building Renewal and Equipment Replacement should be budgeted as 2% of Budget Year estimated General Operating Revenue (GOR).

Net Tax Levy	\$18,306,119
Less: excluded Debt	(885,612)
Net State Aid plus Local Receipts	<u>3,351,294</u>
GOR	\$20,771,801

Police Cruiser	\$ 51,600
Flail Mower Lease	24,090
Est. DPW Discret. (50%)	50,000
School Projects (5)	174,969
Library Projects (3)	<u>52,050</u>
Total	\$352,709

2% GOR	\$415,436	<b>SHORT OF TARGET</b>
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ARTICLE XX – **Regular Action** MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$139,452 for the purpose of increasing the Town General Stabilization Fund, said sum to be raised from Taxation.

**Background:** This figure is the sum of 51.5% of the annual income from the Kearsarge lease (\$81,778), plus 0. 3% of PYGOR (\$57,654).

This ensures that operating revenue is not increased beyond a realistic level, and that appropriations are made each year to maintain prudent reserves for sudden reductions in State Aid.

**Sponsor:** Finance Committee recommends 7-0

**Selectboard:** recommends 3-0

**Vote Required:** Two-thirds

ARTICLE XX – **Regular Action** MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$38,436 for the purpose of increasing the Town Capital Stabilization Fund, said sum to be raised from Taxation.

**Background:** This figure is 0.2% of PYGOR, to enable regular appropriations for Capital requests.

**Sponsor:** Finance Committee recommends 7-0

**Selectboard:** recommends 3-0

**Vote Required:** Two-thirds

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ARTICLE XX – **Regular Action** MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$38,507 for the purpose of increasing the GMRSD Stabilization Fund, said sum to be raised from Taxation.

**Background:** This figure is 48.5% of **half of the** Kearsarge lease payment, and is devoted to capital equipment purchases by the school district to support the Montague elementary schools in the district .

**Sponsor:** Finance Committee recommends **7-0**

**Selectboard:** recommends **3-0**

**Vote Required:** Two-thirds

ARTICLE XX – **Regular Action** MOVED: That the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$50,000 for the purpose of increasing the Town OPEB Trust fund, said sum to be raised from Taxation

**Background:** In the past, towns paid these benefits on a “Pay As You Go” basis, which does not recognize the unfunded future liability for Other Post-Employment Benefits (principally retiree health insurance). Towns are now required to fund the unfunded liability. Montague’s approximate liability is **\$5,320,000** and our Trust Fund is presently about \$480,000. This appropriation is a token recognition of our liability; it will increase after the unfunded pension liability has been covered, approximately 2030.

The OPEB Trust Fund is administered as part of the State’s Pension Reserves Investment Trust, which benefits from significant investment income.

**Sponsor:** Finance Committee recommends **7-0**

**Selectboard:** recommends **3-0**

**Vote Required:** Two-thirds



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Option 2 for Financial Policies information

**ARTICLES XX – YY: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

Articles X-Y are expected to be dealt with as a consent agenda, with a single vote taken for all x articles, but with discussion of individual articles allowed.

**Background:**

In 2014 the Selectboard adopted a statement of Financial Management Policies, establishing a set of goals the town strives to meet in order to support the sustainability in its operations. Adherence to them also helps to provide resources for periodic major expenditures or to respond to unusual changes in revenue. (These goals do not include the Colle Building, the Airport, or the Water & Pollution Control Facility, each of which has its own resources.)

Some goals are “general health” goals, which may not require an appropriation, and others are “regular action” goals, prescribing annual provisions to address current and future needs. The benchmark used for several of these goals is the Prior Year General Operating Revenue. The following measures show how well the town adheres to these goals.

**General Health Measures**

1. For Fiscal Year 2019, the total of all non-WPCF stabilization funds plus Free Cash should be between \$960,906 and \$1,921,812. The current combined balance of these funds is \$1,653,102, so no action is needed.
2. The Town General Stabilization should have a balance of at least \$960,906. This fund is intended to be used only in the case of reductions in state aid. The current balance is \$981,128, so no action is needed.
3. Budgeted long term debt service plus pay-as-you-go capital projects should be between \$1,153,087 and \$1,537,449. The Fiscal Year 2020 recommended amounts are \$1,197,254, so no action is needed.
4. The policies recommend spending \$433,148 on building renewal and equipment replacement. The Fiscal Year 2020 recommended amounts total \$287,419, but when you add in the \$212,975,000 appropriated at the February Special Town Meeting, it brings the total to \$500,394, so no action is needed.

**Regular Actions**

- The policies suggest certain percentages of prior year revenues be appropriated to the Town’s General and Capital Stabilization Funds from Taxation. Additionally, when the Town began leasing property for a solar farm, it was decided to allocate the lease revenue between the town and the GMRSD according to the percentage used in the affordable assessment.

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The Town's share of this goes to the Town Capital Stabilization Fund, and the total amount of Article X includes expected lease revenue plus the regular annual appropriation. Articles X and Y address these policies.

- Depending on calculations on enrollment trends and current costs per pupil, money should be moved to the FCTS Stabilization Fund or used for the current budget. While this calculation would require the use of funds this year, the expected spike in next year's FCTS assessment convinced the committee to put money into that fund instead. Article A addresses this item.
- Other Post-Employment Benefits (principally retiree health insurance) - In the past, towns simply paid retiree health insurance benefits on a "Pay As You Go" basis, without recognizing the unfunded future liability. This appropriation is a token recognition of our liability; it will increase after the unfunded pension liability has been covered, around 2030. Article B addresses this item.